

prevented the advancement of the work. Further, no steps were taken beforehand to divert the current, and the result was that the volume of water that kept rushing up to the breach grew greater day by day, until at length the freshets did not cease to close, and was possible. Li Hui-cho and his colleagues can not escape blame for the inefficiency of their management. Having regard to this statement that the matter is beset with difficulties, it would serve no good purpose if we were to force them reluctantly to press on the work. We therefore command that it be temporarily postponed, that steps be taken for safeguarding what has been already finished, and that materials be collected for immediately resuming it as soon as the autumn freshets shall have subsided. Li Hui-cho, as Director-General of the River, was invested with a responsibility which could not devolve on others. On the day he took leave of us he boasted that he would complete the work in a very short time. From the time he reached his post however, the whole tone of his reports was of an evasive nature, and he never exerted himself in the least to press on the work. His whole conduct was trifling and perfunctory, with the result that the work has miscarried on the eve of completion, and public funds have been lost. His efficiency and that of Ch'ing Fu are alike, and if either of them were left at the work, it can scarcely be expected that they would attain any success. We command that Li Hui-cho be stripped of his feather and his brevet rank and that both he and Ch'ing Fu be sent to the military post roads to atone for their guilt. Li Hui-cho was the officer in supreme control of the work, and Ni Wen-wei had joint responsibility with him. They had neither method nor fixed plans in the direction of the work, and they are also blameworthy. We command therefore that both Li Hui-cho and Ni Wen-wei be degraded to third class rank and left for the present at their posts. We have already deputed Wu Ta-ch'ing to act as Director-General of the Yellow River, and we command Li Hui-cho to remain in charge until his arrival, after which he will proceed at once to Peking. Shao Hsien and Pan Ch'ien-wei, who were in charge of the works at the eastern and western embankments, both failed to attain any measure of success, and have incurred a grave penalty; let them both be degraded and remain at the work to atone for their offence. If they again fail to exert themselves and to assure the safety of the new work they will assuredly be severely dealt with. We have directed the Board of Revenue to raise large funds with-out delay for the prosecution of the work, and we command Li Hui-cho to take the requisite measures for diverting the current, making excavations and collecting supplies of materials, furnishing us at the same time with a minute report on the subject. He and Ni Wen-wei will ascertain the names of the civil and military authorities at the two embankments who have contributed to the present mishap and denounce them unsparringly.

FOREIGN TRADE AT CHINKIANG.

The correspondent of the Shanghai Mercury writes under date August 26th:—

Foreign merchants in Chinkiang are still growling at the continued decrease in their business; various reasons are given by them as to the cause, but so far as I know they have not yet struck one of the chief. In one of the papers lately a letter appeared, evidently penned by them, in which the whole blame was thrown on the shoulders of H.M.'s Consul and our Commissioner of Customs. This was most unjust, for these two officials have at all times done their best to further the interests of all foreigners in the port even under most trying circumstances; in the matter of transit passes, about which we have heard so much, and which is the great cause of complaint it is the merchants themselves who are to blame for having been so short-sighted as to agree to the conditional rules in the first instance. These rules were agreed to many years before our present Consul and Commissioner arrived, and this being the case, it is scarcely fair to blame them if they find it difficult to rectify what the merchants now think was a mistake. These two officials have a most delicate task to perform; they have to re-open a dispute which was settled by their predecessors, and further to induce the Chinese to give up the advantage they then obtained. At all times it is next to impossible to make a Chinaman give up anything once allowed to him, and in the present instance it is doubly difficult, as there is only one way, and that is for H.M.'s Consul to demand the necessary alteration as a Treaty right and to take no refusal; but this would be a most dangerous step for any British Consul to take, for should any trouble occur, he certainly would not receive any encouragement from Peking. The matter would no doubt be settled to the satisfaction of the Chinaman, but the Consul's name would, in all probability, be entered in the black book for a "Paddy's promotion" or removal to some port well out of the way. This has occurred before to-day to Consuls who have shown themselves more than commonly zealous in seeking to forward British interests, and there seems to be no reason for supposing that the Foreign Office intend making any change in their *modus operandi*, which evidently means "Peace at any price during our time," they do not care one iota for the future, and it appears to be a matter of the most perfect indifference whether the privileges which have been won from the Chinese at the point of the bayonet are allowed to British residents or not, so long as they are not troubled to settle the matter.

The cause to which we may attribute this decrease in the foreigners' business, is the admission of Chinese, who have no connection at all with foreigners or their businesses, into the Concession; they are able to rent bongs and can put through all their business themselves; also, their expenses being less than half those of a foreigner, they do all business at a very small profit, and in this way have now nearly the whole of it in their own hands. I hardly think it was intended by the British Government that they should be allowed to live and do their business there as freely as the foreigner himself; yet such is now the case, and the foreigner is being quietly ousted out. The foreigner can do little or no business, and he is not even allowed a quiet residence in the Concession; he is hemmed in on all sides by Chinese opium bongs, pawnbroking shops, or by hotels, which are nothing more or less than respectable (?) Chinese brothels; during the day the streets are crowded with coolies carrying goods, the bongs are lined with boats carrying their cargoes, but these coolies, etc., represent none of the foreigner's business; it is all purely Chinese, at least if it is.

The Chinaman, on the other hand, finds the so-called British Concession a most lucrative place for business; he is well out of the way of his own officials; he finds it most handy to the foreign Customs; he, to a certain extent, appropriates foreign houses, goods, roads, police and lighting, etc., and taken on the whole, as a convenient place to do business and also live in; it surpasses anything he has previously known; he is well supplied with every convenience; as an unlimited number of "shop-girls" exist, and are allowed to live in, and wander from place to place in the Concession at all hours of the day or night for his special delectation.

To sum up the relative position of the Chinaman and the foreigners in the Concession:—

The Chinaman prospers and has all his heart as he desires; and his comfort is greatly added to by the good order which the foreigners maintain; but on the other hand, the foreigner is barely able to make his "chow," and is at all times annoyed, especially at night, by the disorder and noise introduced by the Celestial.

The question which now naturally arises is, where are we to look for an explanation of this state of things? and there is only one reply. Four merchants, three of whom are absent, have by hook, and by rumour speaks truly, sometimes by crook, obtained possession, nominally at any rate, of nearly the whole concession. (I use the word nominally advisedly, as I am perfectly aware that, in one case at least, the property does not belong to the merchant, but is merely held in trust by him for a Chinaman.)

Now the only possible interest that the three absentees can have in the Concession is to let their houses to the highest bidders; they ask no questions as to who the people are, or for what purposes the houses may be taken; that does not affect them, in the slightest degree, so long as the dollars are forthcoming; the fourth gentleman who still remains in the port, follows well in the footsteps of his absent brothers; lately he has astonished everyone by opening one of his houses, directly on the Bund, as a Chinese Hotel (the usual number of "sing-song" girls, etc., being kept) much to the disgust and annoyance of every resident in the place except himself.

I have done, but before closing I would say this last word: that if some one in authority does not very soon look into these matters, Chinkiang as a British Concession will be a thing of the past; it may retain its name, but most certainly not its nature.

NOTES FROM CHINESE PAPERS.

We are glad to learn that the plague of wingless locusts reported from Yangchow (Kiangsu) has been checked by heavy rain drowning them out on 22nd and 23rd August. The rice crops are also looking up, and every one is pleased.

The 11 shipwrecked Siamese sailors who were in the charge of the Shanghai Magistrate were forwarded per C.M.S.N. Co.'s steamer *Kwanglee* to Canton; from thence the Chinese Government will provide them with passage tickets to Bangkok.

The passenger traffic by rail between Tientsin and Taku opened two days earlier than expected, viz., on 21st August. The cars were crowded. The pace, at first slow, was increased as the people gradually lost their alarm, and they felt like the Taoist sage Lieh Tsz riding on the wind.

The Shanghai Magistrate has issued a metrical six-syllable proclamation, in which he orders that no animals shall be killed for food for five days, during which officials and people will engage in prayer for a more plentiful season. The frequent sudden deaths of late are the visitation of Heaven for our sins, not only against moral, but dietetic and sanitary principles, by eating cold raw fruit, etc.

At San-sha, in the Fuh-ning Prefecture, Fukien Province, the Heptai (Colone) hired a number of Yellow-caps (Taoist priests), to perform the ceremony called Releasing the Water Star, by the great bridge. A man in the crowd threw a stone into the river, when the Colone's people, enraged at his breaking the charm, dragged him into the yamen. The crowd stormed the Colone's yamen, dragged him out in triumph and released him, and the gentry are not inclined to let the matter rest here but are petitioning the Ch'ien-tai (General) about the matter.

The Hainan island roads are being made through the mountains occupied by the aboriginal Li savages, and a Company has been formed under Government auspices for cutting down the trees of which there are too great a profusion. The clearing away of some of the jungle will make the country both less malarious, and easier of access. About 20 junkloads of excellent timber have left for Kung-mun, Hoihow, Luichow, and other places in Canton province, and there is an eager demand for the wood at Hongkong. Before the falling operations commenced, funeral services were held and masses chanted for the renowned commander Ma Yuan, who was the pioneer of Chinese colonisation in Hainan about 30-40 A.D., and since whose time till recently no such energetic efforts have been made in that direction. The Li savages are rapidly tending their submission.

The severe manner in which the Shanghai Magistrate dealt with Ho Tai-tung and Yin Kwang-hai, the two still unrepented prisoners who made a disturbance in the prison, was duly recorded in our columns some months back. These prisoners have been again relapsing into their old ways, and oppressing their fellow-prisoners. Lately, because they picked a quarrel with the prisoner Ko Lao Hui-tz, and were reproved by the gaoler Liu, they turned upon Liu and cursed at him all day, until he complained to the magistrate. The magistrate the same evening, which was a few days ago, held a judicial examination of Ho Tai-tung, Yin Kwang-hai, Wang Puh-ling, and Chao A-oh. The latter two said that they had taken no part in the row, which was all caused by Ho Tai-tung and the other man. They were then sent back to prison. Ho Tai-tung said "since we were severely punished we have been behaving well. The present trouble was caused by the prisoners Koh-lao Hui-tz and Li Wen-ming boring a great hole above in the wall. Knowing it was against the prison rules, we remonstrated with them, and then they set the gaoler Liu against us. Koh Lao Hui-tz besides often has his wife in to see him." The Magistrate said "You are an incorrigible scoundrel" and ordered the torture of the "iron knee-protector" (which he said) to be applied to him, then had him confined in a large wooden cage, and carefully guarded. The cage was set in the great hall, but the prisoner audaciously continued to swear and curse at every one indiscriminately from within it. The Magistrate therefore ordered that the seals set on the cage were not to be opened nor the man ever released from it again during his life. Yin Kwang-hai said "Since receiving my severe punishment, I have not dared to meddle with what does not concern me, and I crave for mercy, for I have been ill a long time." The Magistrate after further enquiry of the gaoler, dealt more leniently with Yin Kwang-hai and returned him to the prison (in which it appears there are no separate cells), putting off the enquiry into the conduct of Koh Lao Hui-tz, etc., till another day.

TIENTSIN.

25th August, 1888.

There has been much sickness and considerable mortality in the villages around Tientsin, also at Taku. The illness, which is generally of short duration, begins with cramps, collapse ensues, and then death. The strong men are attacked as well as the weak, and in most cases succumb.

It is thought open to question whether the epidemic is now prevalent amongst the Chinese population is Asiatic cholera, as some of the distinctive symptoms of that dread malady are

lacking in the patients now suffering. But as regards fatality, the disease that has visited us seems quite as deadly, and is also very brief in its course. Dr. Macgowan, some years ago, said that the sickness which ravaged Shanghai was "dry cholera," and the Tientsin people seem to have something answering to this phrase upon them.

An immense body of water has come down from the mountains and higher levels. The Yangtze or Hun-bo has broken its banks, and the embankment on the Peiho, between Matou and Ho-hsi-wu, has given way or been overflowed. The country between Ho-hsi-wu and Tungchow is now badly flooded. The crops of Indian corn and millet, which 14 days ago were promising well, indeed, were said to be the finest seen in memory of man, are in danger of being destroyed. It is a most miserable state of things, and the floods this year are quite as bad as they were in 1886 and 1887.

The steamer *Fungshun*, Capt. Tisdall, which was fitted with a new engine last winter on the quadruple expansion system, arrived at our wharf at 8 p.m. on the 23rd inst. She left Shanghai on the morning of the 21st inst., and made her trip from port to port in exactly 4 days, or 60 hours. The voyage is the quickest on record. The *Haan* once made the journey in about 64 hours. The *Fungshun's* engines work admirably well, and her increased speed, greater cargo capacity, and reduced coal consumption are very notable. The actual superiority of the new engines over the old ones, which were, in their day, very fine, surpasses 25 per cent.

The works at Port Arthur, entrusted to the French Syndicate, are meeting with considerable hindrance. Of the four sides of the basin three are walled almost completely, wanting only coping stones, we are told, partially at least, but on the fourth side there is a quicksand, in which it is not easy to obtain stable foundation for the wall. There will, in consequence, be delay and trouble in obtaining proper basements by piling, concrete, or other methods of hydraulic engineering. In the meantime, owing partly to the overflow caused by heavy rains, and partly it is suspected by some continued leakage from the sea, the basin has an inconvenient quantity of water in it, some say 9 feet, others say 12 feet deep. The summer season at Port Arthur seems to have been very rainy.

We regret to record the death at Kai-ping of Mr. John Naylor, a native of Lancaster, aged 35, in the employ of the Chinese Engineering and Mining Company as Senior Overman. He joined the service five years ago, and has only recently brought his wife to China, who survives him with a young family of four, the eldest of whom is 12 years of age. He was greatly respected by all classes of Chinese and foreigners alike. His death was caused by a severe attack of dysentery.

A regular communication by first-class passenger steamers between this port and Hongkong and Canton will soon be opened. Just now some large steamers belonging to the Indo-China Company's line come to our port occasionally, but Messrs. Butterfield & Swire are also going to compete for the trade. Their first steamer, a vessel like the *Tungchow*, has already arrived at Hongkong, and will soon open their new line.

The powerful and well-disciplined Japanese squadron, commanded by Admiral Ito, an accomplished seaman well versed in all the modern methods of naval warfare, whether cruising or blockading, or *vedette* duty, or defence of positions, or attack of batteries, or combat in line of battle, or the use of the ram and torpedo, arrived at Taku Bar on the 22nd instant. The fleet contains no foreigners whatever. The navigating officers, the engineers, the gunnery instructors, the surgeons—of whom a full number serve in the fleet—are all Japanese. The fleet is in excellent order, its manoeuvres are well done, and in all respects of efficiency for warfare the crews take good rank according to European standards. The Vice-Admiral should send intelligent officials to report specially on two matters: the Japanese naval medical service, and the provisioning of the crews and officers. In the Chinese ships there are no doctors or surgeons trained according to Western methods, and the provisioning of the Chinese crews and sailors is barbarous and not compatible with naval efficiency of any reasonable kind. The Japanese ships are:—

Takachio, cruiser, flag ship of Admiral Ito; Capt. Isobe.
Naniwa, cruiser, Capt. Matsumura.
Trukuchi, cruiser, Capt. Ogata.
Foo-to, ironclad, Capt. Aral.
Kaimon, sloop, Capt. Omoto.
Musashi, gunboat, Comdr. Arima.
—Chinese Times.

Today's Advertisements.

STEAM TO SHANGHAI.

THE P. & O. S. N. Co.'s Steamship

"ANCONA"

will leave for the above place TO-MORROW, the 4th instant, at NOON.

E. L. WOODIN, Superintendent.

Hongkong, 3rd September, 1888. [3]

STEAM TO STRAITS AND BOMBAY.

THE P. & O. S. N. Co.'s Steamship

"DECCAN"

will leave for the above places on SATURDAY, the 8th instant, at NOON.

E. L. WOODIN, Superintendent.

Hongkong, 3rd September, 1888. [370]

THE STEAM LAUNCH COMPANY, LIMITED.

APPLICATION FOR SHARES.

Apply to the Undersigned

A. G. GORDON, Secretary and Manager.

Pedder's Wharf, Hongkong, 3rd September, 1888. [871]

HONGKONG AND WHAMPOA DOCK COMPANY, LIMITED.

NOTICE TO SHAREHOLDERS.

CONTRIBUTING SHAREHOLDERS are requested to send in a Statement of Business Contributed during the half-year ended 30th June, 1888, on or before the 30th instant, on which date the Accounts will be CLOSED.

By Order of the Board of Directors.

D. GILLIES, Secretary.

Hongkong, 3rd September, 1888. [872]

CHINA TRADERS' INSURANCE COMPANY, LIMITED.

NOTICE.

THE GENERAL DIVIDEND declared for the year ended April 30th last, at the rate of \$1 per Share of \$10, is now payable. Shareholders are requested to apply at the Company's Office for Warrants.

A. S. GARFITT, Acting Secretary.

Hongkong, 3rd September, 1888. [873]

Today's Advertisements.

GOVERNMENT NOTIFICATION.

THE following Particulars of Sale of Crown Land by Public Auction, to be held on the spot, on

MONDAY,

the 10th day of September, 1888, at 5 P.M., are published for general information.

By Command,

FREDERICK STEWART, Colonial Secretary.

Hongkong, 1st September, 1888. [868]

Particulars of the letting by Public Auction Sale, to be held on MONDAY, the 10th day of September, 1888, at 5 P.M., by Order of His Excellency the GOVERNOR, of One Lot of CROWN LAND, in the Colony of Hongkong, for a term of 75 Years.

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